The ONE Thing

Best-selling authors, Gary Keller and Jay Papasan in their book *The One Thing: The Surprisingly Simple Truth Behind Extraordinary Results* makes you think…deeply. You find yourself drawn into personal evaluation with statements like: *The prescription for extraordinary results is knowing what matters to you and taking daily doses of actions in alignment with it.* While that thought may not be revolutionary, the genius of the book is causing you to pay attention to the direction and decisions in your life by asking thoughtful, probing, and at times, uncomfortable questions.

Of the many gems of insight, two stand out: First, their usage of the Focusing Question creates an extraordinarily effective filter for how to leverage the finite resource of time. And second, they challenge the pursuit of leading a "balanced" life, in exchange for leading a "prioritized" one.

Check out these Book Notes to see how you can increase your impact by implementing "the one thing."

Title: ***The ONE Thing:*** *The Surprisingly Simple Truth Behind Extraordinary Results*

Authors: **Gary Keller and Jay Papasan**

Book Description:

People are using this simple, powerful concept to focus on what matters most in their personal and work lives. Companies are helping their employees be more productive with study groups, training, and coaching. Sales teams are boosting sales. Churches are conducting classes and recommending for their members.

By focusing their energy on one thing at a time people are living more rewarding lives by building their careers, strengthening their finances, losing weight and getting in shape, deepening their faith, and nurturing stronger marriages and personal relationships.

YOU WANT LESS. You want fewer distractions and less on your plate. The daily barrage of e-mails, texts, tweets, messages, and meetings distract you and stress you out. The simultaneous demands of work and family are taking a toll. And what's the cost? Second-rate work, missed deadlines, smaller paychecks, fewer promotions–and lots of stress.

AND YOU WANT MORE. You want more productivity from your work. More income for a better lifestyle. You want more satisfaction from life, and more time for yourself, your family, and your friends.

NOW YOU CAN HAVE BOTH —— LESS AND MORE. In The ONE Thing, you'll learn to cut through the clutter; achieve better results in less time; build momentum toward your goal; dial down the stress; overcome that overwhelmed feeling; revive your energy; stay on track; master what matters to you. The ONE Thing delivers extraordinary results in every area of your life–work, personal, family, and spiritual. WHAT'S YOUR ONE

THING?

Book Quotes:

Out of the mouth of a fictional character to our ears comes the secret of success. Whether the writers knew it or unwittingly stumbled on it, what they wrote was the absolute truth. The ONE Thing is the best approach to getting what you want. LOCATION: 57

Where I'd had huge success, I had narrowed my concentration to one thing, and where my success varied, my focus had too. LOCATION: 85

If everyone has the same number of hours in a day, why do some people seem to get so much more done than others? How do they do more, achieve more, earn more, have more? If time is the currency of achievement, then why are some able to cash in their allotment for more chips than others? The answer is they make getting to the heart of things the heart of their approach. They go small. LOCATION: 87

"Going small" is ignoring all the things you could do and doing what you should do. It's recognizing that not all things matter equally and finding the things that matter most. It's a tighter way to connect what you do with what you want. It's realizing that extraordinary results are directly determined by how narrow you can make your focus. LOCATION: 91

You have only so much time and energy, so when you spread yourself out, you end up spread thin. You want your achievements to add up, but that actually takes subtraction, not addition. You need to be doing fewer things for more effect instead of doing more things with side effects. The problem with trying to do too much is that even if it works, adding more to your work and your life without cutting anything brings a lot of bad with it: missed deadlines, disappointing results, high stress, long hours, lost sleep, poor diet, no exercise, and missed moments with family and friends— all in the name of going after something that is easier to get than you might imagine. LOCATION: 98

Getting extraordinary results is all about creating a domino effect in your life. LOCATION: 130

Highly successful people know this. So every day they line up their priorities anew, find the lead domino, and whack away at it until it falls. LOCATION: 133

The key is over time. Success is built sequentially. It's one thing at a time. LOCATION: 140

No one succeeds alone. No one. LOCATION: 185

Passion for something leads to disproportionate time practicing or working at it. That time spent eventually translates to skill, and when skill improves, results improve. Better results generally lead to more enjoyment, and more passion and more time is invested. It can be a virtuous cycle all the way to extraordinary results. LOCATION: 196

The ONE Thing shows up time and again in the lives of the successful because it's a fundamental truth. LOCATION: 212

THE SIX LIES BETWEEN YOU AND SUCCESS:

- Everything Matters Equally
- Multitasking
- A Disciplined Life

- Willpower Is Always on Will-Call
- A Balanced Life
- Big Is Bad
  LOCATION: 275

The six lies are beliefs that get into our heads and become operational principles driving us the wrong way. LOCATION: 278

“Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things which matter least.” —Johann Wolfgang von Goethe LOCATION: 283

When everything feels urgent and important, everything seems equal. We become active and busy, but this doesn’t actually move us any closer to success. Activity is often unrelated to productivity, and busyness rarely takes care of business. LOCATION: 299

Not everything matters equally, and success isn’t a game won by whoever does the most. Yet that is exactly how most play it on a daily basis. LOCATION: 305

Instead of a to-do list, you need a success list—a list that is purposefully created around extraordinary results. LOCATION: 323

To-do lists tend to be long; success lists are short. One pulls you in all directions; the other aims you in a specific direction. One is a disorganized directory and the other is an organized directive. LOCATION: 324

Pareto’s Principle, it turns out, is as real as the law of gravity, and yet most people fail to see the gravity of it. It’s not just a theory—it is a provable, predictable certainty of nature and one of the greatest productivity truths ever discovered. Richard Koch, in his book The 80/20 Principle, defined it about as well as anyone: “The 80/20 Principle asserts that a minority of causes, inputs, or effort usually lead to a majority of the results, outputs, or rewards.” In other words, in the world of success, things aren’t equal. A small amount of causes creates most of the results. Just the right input creates most of the output. Selected effort creates almost all of the rewards. LOCATION: 345

Pareto points us in a very clear direction: the majority of what you want will come from the minority of what you do. Extraordinary results are disproportionately created by fewer actions than most realize. LOCATION: 353

No matter the task, mission, or goal. Big or small. Start with as large a list as you want, but develop the mindset that you will whittle your way from there to the critical few and not stop until you end with the essential ONE. The imperative ONE. The ONE Thing. LOCATION: 374

Multitasking is a lie. It’s a lie because nearly everyone accepts it as an effective thing to do. It’s become so mainstream that people actually think it’s something they should do, and do as often as possible. We not only hear talk about doing it, we even hear talk about getting better at. LOCATION: 415

When you try to do two things at once, you either can’t or won’t do either well. If you think multitasking is an effective way to get more done, you’ve got it backward. It’s an effective way to get less done. LOCATION: 423

People can actually do two or more things at once, such as walk and talk, or chew gum and read a map; but, like computers, what we can’t do is focus on two things at once. Our attention bounces back and forth. LOCATION: 434

Task switching exacts a cost few realize they’re even paying. LOCATION: 470

Every time we try to do two or more things at once, we're simply dividing up our focus and dumbing down all of the outcomes in the process. LOCATION: 490

There is this pervasive idea that the successful person is the "disciplined person" who leads a "disciplined life." It's a lie. The truth is we don't need any more discipline than we already have. We just need to direct and manage it a little better. LOCATION: 535

Success is actually a short race—a sprint fueled by discipline just long enough for habit to kick in and take over. LOCATION: 539

In any discussion about success, the words "discipline" and "habit" ultimately intersect. Though separate in meaning, they powerfully connect to form the foundation for achievement—regularly working at something until it regularly works for you. When you discipline yourself, you're essentially training yourself to act in a specific way. Stay with this long enough and it becomes routine—in other words, a habit. LOCATION: 542

The trick to success is to choose the right habit and bring just enough discipline to establish it. That's it. That's all the discipline you need. As this habit becomes part of your life, you'll start looking like a disciplined person, but you won't be one. What you will be is someone who has something regularly working for you because you regularly worked on it. You'll be a person who used selected discipline to build a powerful habit. LOCATION: 552

How long does it take to establish a new habit? They were looking for the moment when a new behavior becomes automatic or ingrained…The results suggest that it takes an average of 66 days to acquire a new habit. LOCATION: 588

For most of my life I never gave willpower much thought. Once I did, it captivated me. The ability to control oneself to determine one's actions is a pretty powerful idea. Base it on training and it's called discipline. But do it because you simply can, that's raw power. The power of will. LOCATION: 618

The implications are staggering. The more we use our mind, the less minding power we have. Willpower is like a fast-twitch muscle that gets tired and needs rest. It's incredibly powerful, but it has no endurance. LOCATION: 669

When our willpower runs out, we all revert to our default settings. This begs the question: What are your default settings? If your willpower is dragging, will you grab the bag of carrots or the bag of chips? Will you be up for focusing on the work at hand or down for any distraction that drops in? When your most important work is done while your willpower wanes, default will define your level of achievement. LOCATION: 704

We lose our willpower not because we think about it but because we don't. Without appreciating that it can come and go, we let it do exactly that. Without intentionally protecting it every day, we allow ourselves to go from a will and a way to no will and no way. If success is what were after, this won't work. LOCATION: 710

So how do you put your willpower to work? You think about it. Pay attention to it. Respect it. You make doing what matters most a priority when your willpower is its highest. In other words, you give it the time of day it deserves. LOCATION: 717

WHAT TAXES YOUR WILLPOWER

- Implementing new behaviors
- Filtering distractions
- Resisting temptation

- Suppressing emotion
- Restraining aggression
- Suppressing impulses
- Taking tests
- Trying to impress others
- Coping with fear
- Doing something you don't enjoy
- Selecting long-term over short-term rewards

LOCATION: 719

Every day, without realizing it, we engage in all manner of activities that diminish our willpower. Willpower is depleted when we make decisions to focus our attention, suppress our feelings and impulses, or modify our behavior in pursuit of goals. LOCATION: 723

So, if you want to get the most out of your day, do your most important work—your ONE Thing—early, before your willpower is drawn down. Since your self-control will be sapped throughout the day, use it when it's at full strength on what matters most. LOCATION: 729

A "balanced life" is a myth—a misleading concept most accept as a worthy and attainable goal without ever stopping to truly consider it. I want you to consider it. I want you to challenge it. I want you to reject it. A balanced life is a lie. LOCATION: 746

We hear about balance so much we automatically assume it's exactly what we should be seeking. It's not. Purpose, meaning, significance—these are what make a successful life. Seek them and you will most certainly live your life out of balance, criss-crossing an invisible middle line as you pursue your priorities. The act of living a full life by giving time to what matters is a balancing act. Extraordinary results require focused attention and time. Time on one thing means time away from another. This makes balance impossible. LOCATION: 752

The reason we shouldn't pursue balance is that the magic never happens in the middle; magic happens at the extremes. The dilemma is that chasing the extremes presents real challenges. We naturally understand that success lies at the outer edges, but we don't know how to manage our lives while we're out there. LOCATION: 786

When you gamble with your time, you may be placing a bet you can't cover. Even if you're sure you can win, be careful that you can live with what you lose. LOCATION: 814

Replace the word "balance" with "counterbalance" and what you experience makes sense. The things we presume to have balance are really just counterbalancing. LOCATION: 819

Leaving some things undone is a necessary tradeoff for extraordinary results. But you can't leave everything undone, and that's where counterbalancing comes in. The idea of counterbalancing is that you never go so far that you can't find your way back or stay so long that there is nothing waiting for you when you return. LOCATION: 827

To achieve an extraordinary result you must choose what matters most and give it all the time it demands. This requires getting extremely out of balance in relation to all other work issues, with only infrequent counterbalancing to address them. LOCATION: 836

The question of balance is really a question of priority. When you change your language from balancing to

prioritizing, you see your choices more clearly and open the door to changing your destiny. Extraordinary results demand that you set a priority and act on it. When you act on your priority, you'll automatically go out of balance, giving more time to one thing over another. LOCATION: 852

Start leading a counterbalanced life. Let the right things take precedence when they should and get to the rest when you can. An extraordinary life is a counterbalancing act. LOCATION: 869

Big is bad is a lie. It's quite possibly the worst lie of all, for if you fear big success, you'll either avoid it or sabotage your efforts to achieve it. LOCATION: 880

Success requires action, and action requires thought. But here's the catch—the only actions that become springboards to succeeding big are those informed by big thinking to begin with. Make this connection, and the importance of how big you think begins to sink in. LOCATION: 914

Big stands for greatness—extraordinary results. Pursue a big life and you're pursuing the greatest life you can possibly live. To live great, you have to think big. You must be open to the possibility that your life and what you accomplish can become great. Achievement and abundance show up because they're the natural outcomes of doing the right things with no limits attached. LOCATION: 965

Here's what I found out: We overthink, overplan, and overanalyze our careers, our businesses, and our lives; that long hours are neither virtuous nor healthy; and that we usually succeed in spite of most of what we do, not because of it. I discovered that we can't manage time, and that the key to success isn't in all the things we do but in the handful of things we do well. I learned that success comes down to this: being appropriate in the moments of your life. If you can honestly say, "This is where I'm meant to be right now, doing exactly what I'm doing," then all the amazing possibilities for your life become possible. LOCATION: 1020

You may be asking, "Why focus on a question when what we really crave is an answer?" It's simple. Answers come from questions, and the quality of any answer is directly determined by the quality of the question. Ask the wrong question, get the wrong answer. Ask the right question, get the right answer. Ask the most powerful question possible, and the answer can be life altering. LOCATION: 1050

One of the most empowering moments of my life came when I realized that life is a question and how we live it is our answer. How we phrase the questions we ask ourselves determines the answers that eventually become our life. LOCATION: 1071

You ask one question: the Focusing Question. Anyone who dreams of an uncommon life eventually discovers there is no choice but to seek an uncommon approach to living it. The Focusing Question is that uncommon approach. In a world of no instructions, it becomes the simple formula for finding exceptional answers that lead to extraordinary results. LOCATION: 1077

The Focusing Question is a big-picture map and small-focus compass. LOCATION: 1087

The Focusing Question collapses all possible questions into one: "What's the ONE Thing I can do / such that by doing it / everything else will be easier or unnecessary?" LOCATION: 1097

You know about habits. They can be hard to break—and hard to create. But we are unknowingly acquiring new ones all the time. When we start and continue a way of thinking or a way of acting over a long enough period, we've created a new habit. The choice we face is whether or not we want to form habits that get us what we want from life. If we do, then the Focusing Question is the most powerful success habit we can have. LOCATION: 1139

For me, the Focusing Question is a way of life. I use it to find my most leveraged priority, make the most out of my time, and get the biggest bang for my buck. Whenever the outcome absolutely matters, I ask it. I ask it when I wake up and start my day. I ask it when I get to work, and again when I get home. What's the ONE Thing I can do such that by doing it everything else will be easier or unnecessary? And when I know the answer, I continue to ask it until I can see the connections and all my dominoes are lined up. LOCATION: 1142

The Focusing Question is the foundational habit I use to achieve extraordinary results and lead a big life. I use it for some things and not at all for others. I apply it to the important areas of my life: my spiritual life, physical health, personal life, key relationships, job, business, and financial life. And I address them in that order—each one is a foundation for the next. LOCATION: 1148

One of the best ways to do this is to put up a sign at work that says, "Until my ONE Thing is done—everything else is a distraction." LOCATION: 1195

The Focusing Question helps you identify your ONE Thing in any situation. It will clarify what you want in the big areas of your life and then drill down to what you must do to get them. It's really a simple process: You ask a great question, then you seek out a great answer. LOCATION: 1209

The Focusing Question helps you ask a great question. Great questions, like great goals, are big and specific. They push you, stretch you, and aim you at big, specific answers. And because they're framed to be measurable, there's no wiggle room about what the results will look like. LOCATION: 1214

When you ask a Great Question, you're in essence pursuing a great goal. And whenever you do this, you'll see the same pattern—Big & Specific. A big, specific question leads to a big, specific answer, which is absolutely necessary for achieving a big goal. LOCATION: 1238

The challenge of asking a Great Question is that, once you've asked it, you're now faced with finding a Great Answer…Answers come in three categories: doable, stretch, and possibility. LOCATION: 1246

Highly successful people choose to live at the outer limits of achievement. They not only dream of but deeply crave what is beyond their natural grasp. They know this type of answer is the hardest to come by but also know that just by extending themselves to find it, they expand and enrich their life for the better. LOCATION: 1256

There is a natural rhythm to our lives that becomes a simple formula for implementing the ONE Thing and achieving extraordinary results: purpose, priority, and productivity. LOCATION: 1303

With typically only 1/9 of an iceberg above water, whatever you see is just the tip of everything that is there. This is exactly how productivity, priority, and purpose are related. What you see is determined by what you don't. LOCATION: 1310

A life lived on purpose is the most powerful of all—and the happiest. LOCATION: 1376

Happiness happens on the way to fulfillment. LOCATION: 1409

Dr. Martin Seligman, past president of the American Psychological Association, believes there are five factors that contribute to our happiness: positive emotion and pleasure, achievement, relationships, engagement, and meaning. Of these, he believes engagement and meaning are the most important. Becoming more engaged in what we do by finding ways to make our life more meaningful is the surest way to finding lasting happiness. When our daily actions fulfill a bigger purpose, the most powerful and enduring happiness can happen. LOCATION: 1409

Purpose is the straightest path to power and the ultimate source of personal strength—strength of conviction and strength to persevere. The prescription for extraordinary results is knowing what matters to you and taking daily doses of actions in alignment with it. When you have a definite purpose for your life, clarity comes faster, which leads to more conviction in your direction, which usually leads to faster decisions. When you make faster decisions, you'll often be the one who makes the first decisions and winds up with the best choices. And when you have the best choices, you have the opportunity for the best experiences. This is how knowing where you're going helps lead you to the best possible outcomes and experiences life has to offer. LOCATION: 1428

When you ask yourself, "What's the ONE Thing I can do in my life that would mean the most to me and the world, such that by doing it everything else would be easier or unnecessary?" you're using the power of The ONE Thing to bring purpose to your life. LOCATION: 1442

Live with purpose and you know where you want to go. Live by priority and you'll know what to do to get there. LOCATION: 1468

Purpose has the power to shape our lives only in direct proportion to the power of the priority we connect it to. Purpose without priority is powerless. LOCATION: 1474

The truth about success is that our ability to achieve extraordinary results in the future lies in stringing together powerful moments, one after the other. What you do in any given moment determines what you experience in the next. Your "present now" and all "future nows" are undeniably determined by the priority you live in the moment. The deciding factor in determining how you set that priority is who wins the battle between your present and future selves. LOCATION: 1489

In the end, putting together a life of extraordinary results simply comes down to getting the most out of what you do, when what you do matters. LOCATION: 1569

Productive people get more done, achieve better results, and earn far more in their hours than the rest. They do so because they devote maximum time to being productive on their top priority, their ONE Thing. They time block their ONE Thing and then protect their time blocks with a vengeance. They've connected the dots between working their time blocks consistently and the extra-ordinary results they seek. LOCATION: 1588

Most people think there's never enough time to be successful, but there is when you block it. Time blocking is a very results-oriented way of viewing and using time. It's a way of making sure that what has to be done gets done. Alexander Graham Bell said, "Concentrate all your thoughts upon the work at hand. The sun's rays do not burn until brought to a focus." Time blocking harnesses your energy and centers it on your most important work. It's productivity's greatest power tool. LOCATION: 1599

If disproportionate results come from one activity, then you must give that one activity disproportionate time. Each and every day, ask this Focusing Question for your blocked time: "Today, what's the ONE Thing I can do for my ONE Thing such that by doing it everything else will be easier or unnecessary?" When you find the answer, you'll be doing the most leveraged activity for your most leveraged work. LOCATION: 1611

Time blocking works on the premise that a calendar records appointments but doesn't care who those appointments are with. So, when you know your ONE Thing, make an appointment with yourself to tackle it. Every day great salespeople generate leads, great programmers program, and great artists paint. Take any profession or any position and fill in the blank. Great success shows up when time is devoted every day to becoming great. LOCATION: 1624

To achieve extraordinary results and experience greatness, time block these three things in the following

order: Time block your time off. Time block your ONE Thing. Time block your planning time. LOCATION: 1627

Extraordinarily successful people launch their year by taking time out to plan their time off. Why? They know they'll need it and they know they'll be able to afford it. In truth, the most successful simply see themselves as working between vacations…By planning your time off in advance, you are, in effect, managing your work time around your downtime instead of the other way around. You're also letting everyone else know well in advance when you'll be out so they can plan accordingly. When you intend to be successful, you start by protecting time to recharge and reward yourself. LOCATION: 1631

After you've time blocked your time off, time block your ONE Thing. Yes, you read that right. Your most important work comes second. Why? Because you can't happily sustain success in your professional life if you neglect your personal "re-creation" time. LOCATION: 1640

The most productive people, the ones who experience extraordinary results, design their days around doing their ONE Thing. Their most important appointment each day is with themselves, and they never miss it. If they complete their ONE Thing before their time block is done, they don't necessarily call it a day. They use the Focusing Question to tell them how they can use the time they have left. LOCATION: 1643

My recommendation is to block four hours a day. This isn't a typo. I repeat: four hours a day. Honestly, that's the minimum. If you can do more, then do it. LOCATION: 1655

To experience extraordinary results, be a maker in the morning and a manager in the afternoon. LOCATION: 1684

For time blocks to actually block time, they must be protected. Although time blocking isn't hard, protecting the time you've blocked is. The world doesn't know your purpose or priorities and isn't responsible for them—you are. So it's your job to protect your time blocks from all those who don't know what matters most to you, and from yourself when you forget. LOCATION: 1715

When I first began to time block, the most effective thing I did was to put up a sheet of paper that said, "Until My ONE Thing Is Done—Everything Else Is A Distraction!" LOCATION: 1729

I believe the healthy view of mastery means giving the best you have to become the best you can be at your most important work. The path is one of an apprentice learning and relearning the basics on a never-ending journey of greater experience and expertise. LOCATION: 1780

Time blocking is essential to mastery, and mastery is essential to time blocking. They go hand in hand—when you do one, you do the other. LOCATION: 1810

There is an undeniable connection between what you do and what you get. Actions determine outcomes, and outcomes inform actions. Be accountable and this feedback loop is how you discover the things you must do to achieve extraordinary results. That's why your final commitment is to live the accountability cycle of results. LOCATION: 1864

Taking complete ownership of your outcomes by holding no one but yourself responsible for them is the most powerful thing you can do to drive your success. LOCATION: 1867

Accountable people achieve results others only dream of. LOCATION: 1873

An accountability partner will positively impact your productivity. They'll keep you honest and on track. Just knowing they are waiting for your next progress report can spur you to better results. Ideally, a coach can "coach" you on how to maximize your performance over time. This is how the very best become the very best.

LOCATION: 1913

THE FOUR THIEVES OF PRODUCTIVITY

1. INABILITY TO SAY "NO" LOCATION: 1951

The way to protect what you've said yes to and stay productive is to say no to anyone or anything that could derail you. LOCATION: 1954

Remember, saying yes to your ONE Thing is your top priority. As long as you can keep this in perspective, saying no to anything that keeps you from keeping your time block should become something you can accept. LOCATION: 1969

2. FEAR OF CHAOS LOCATION: 2001

A not-so-funny thing happens along the way to extraordinary results. Untidiness. Unrest. Disarray. Disorder. When we tirelessly work our time block, clutter automatically takes up residence around us. LOCATION: 2001

One of the greatest thieves of productivity is the unwillingness to allow for chaos or the lack of creativity in dealing with it. LOCATION: 2006

Focusing on ONE Thing has a guaranteed consequence: other things don't get done. Although that's exactly the point, it doesn't automatically make us feel any better about it. There will always be people and projects that simply aren't a part of your biggest single priority but still matter. You will feel them pressing for your attention. There will always be unfinished work and loose ends lying around to snare your focus. Your time block can feel like a submersible, where the deeper you commit to your ONE Thing, the more the pressure mounts for you to come up for air and address everything you've put on hold. LOCATION: 2007

The truth is, it's a package deal. When you strive for greatness, chaos is guaranteed to show up. In fact, other areas of your life may experience chaos in direct proportion to the time you put in on your ONE Thing. It's important for you to accept this instead of fighting it. Oscar-winning filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola warns us that "anything you build on a large scale or with intense passion invites chaos." In other words, get used to it and get over it. LOCATION: 2014

3. POOR HEALTH HABITS LOCATION: 2038

Personal energy mismanagement is a silent thief of productivity. LOCATION: 2043

High achievement and extraordinary results require big energy. The trick is learning how to get it and keep it. LOCATION: 2050

Here's the productivity secret of this plan: when you spend the early hours energizing yourself, you get pulled through the rest of the day with little additional effort. LOCATION: 2081

4. ENVIRONMENT DOESN'T SUPPORT YOUR GOALS LOCATION: 2085

Your environment must support your goals. Your environment is simply who you see and what you experience every day. The people are familiar, the places comfortable. You trust these elements of your environment and quite possibly even take them for granted. But be aware. Anyone and anything at any time can become a thief, diverting your attention away from your most important work and stealing your productivity right from under your nose. For you to achieve extraordinary results, the people surrounding you and your physical surroundings must support your goals. LOCATION: 2089

In time, you begin to think, act, and even look a little like those you hang out with. But not only do their attitudes and health habits influence you, their relative success does too. If the people you spend your time with are high achievers, their achievements can influence your own. LOCATION: 2109

No one succeeds alone and no one fails alone. Pay attention to the people around you. Seek out those who will support your goals, and show the door to anyone who won't. The individuals in your life will influence you and impact you—probably more than you give them credit for. Give them their due and make sure that the sway they have on you sends you in the direction you want to go. LOCATION: 2117

Live with Purpose, Live by Priority, and Live for Productivity. Follow these three for the same reason you make the three commitments and avoid the four thieves—because you want to leave your mark. You want your life to matter. LOCATION: 2155

"One step at a time" may be trite, but it's still true. No matter the objective, no matter the destination, the journey to anything you want always starts with a single step. That step is called the ONE Thing. LOCATION: 2161

The challenge is that living the largest life possible requires you not only to think big, but also to take the necessary actions to get there. Extraordinary results require you to go small. LOCATION: 2173

There is no surefire thing, but there's always something, ONE Thing, that out of everything matters more than anything. I'm not saying there will only be one thing, or even the same thing, forever. I'm saying that at any moment in time there can be only ONE Thing, and when that ONE Thing is in line with your purpose and sits atop your priorities, it will be the most productive thing you can do to launch you toward the best you can be. LOCATION: 2183

What kind of regrets? For me, very few books cause tears, much less require a handkerchief, but Bronnie Ware's 2012 book The Top Five Regrets of the Dying did both. Ware spent many years caring for those facing their own mortality. When she questioned the dying about any regrets they had or anything they would do differently, Bronnie found that common themes surfaced again and again. The five most common were these: I wish that I'd let myself be happier—too late they realized happiness is a choice; I wish I'd stayed in touch with my friends—too often they failed to give them the time and effort they deserved; I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings—too frequently shut mouths and shuttered feelings weighed too heavy to handle; I wish I hadn't worked so hard—too much time spent making a living over building a life caused too much remorse. LOCATION: 2224

As tough as these were, one stood out above them all. The most common regret was this: I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself not the life others expected of me. Half-filled dreams and unfulfilled hopes: this was the number-one regret expressed by the dying. LOCATION: 2230